QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT

DATE: July 28, 2004

STREAMLINING PROJECT: Evaluation of Wildlife Crossing Structures on US Highway 93 Evaro to Polson—Phase 1: Pre-construction data collection and finalization of evaluation

START DATE: March 1, 2002

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: June 30, 2006

FUNDING LEVEL: $562,500 (including 20% match from Montana Department of Transportation)

ANTICIPATED PRODUCTS:

- Memo to Technical Design Committee on monitoring design considerations (completed May 2002)
- Animal-vehicle collision database (50% complete)
- Field Methods and Safety Protocol Handbook (90% complete)
- Summary of literature and existing data (50% complete)
- Memo defining the Measures of Effectiveness (75% complete)
- Long-term Research and Monitoring Evaluation Plan (50% complete)
- Phase 1 Pre-construction Case Study (30% complete)
- Pre-construction field data summary report (30% complete)

MEASURABLE RESULTS:
(i.e. how did the project advance environmental streamlining)

PLEASE PROVIDE THE STATUS OF ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS (E.G., PROJECT MILESTONES, DELIVERABLES, PRODUCT DISSEMINATION, RELEVANT DIVISION ACTIVITIES) FOR THE PROJECT IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE(S) BELOW.

THIRD REPORTING PERIOD (4/1/04-6/30/04)
Division Contact: Bob Seliskar
Funding Spent-to-Date: $461,071.44
Funding Balance Remaining: $101,428.56

On-going Activities

- Literature search and compilation of relevant data.
- Attendance of US 93 Technical Design Committee meetings to document decision-making process for wildlife crossings and fencing design issues for case study.
- Mentoring Whisper Maillet, WTI Graduate Fellow supported in cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), with her thesis field research on US 93 deer crossings and deer-vehicle mortalities.

April 2004

- Gathered literature on Measures of Effectiveness.
- Draft of Field Methods Handbook 90% complete
- Searched for field technician help for summer
- Searched for resources to do tracking bed maintenance (weed control, tilling, fabric and sand replacement)

May 2004

- Screened, interviewed, selected field technician for field data collection
- Contracted Lake County Weed Control to spray herbicide on tracking beds
- Continued progress on Field Methods Handbook and Measures of Effectiveness

June 2004

- Organized and oversaw field crew with grubbing of dead weeds and raking of sand material in preparation for field season
- Graduate student and field technician initiated tracking bed data collection 2x/week.
- Refined data collection techniques to quantify road and landscape variables at high vs. low deer-vehicle collision sites and tracking beds. Road and landscape characteristics will be correlated to both deer-vehicle collision rates and deer crossing rates. The variables of interest and methods of quantifying those variables are the same as what is being collected on US 83 in the Seeley-Swan Valley, Montana, and will provide comparable data that will be useful in meta-analyses of animal-vehicle collision occurrences.
- Fielded numerous media requests regarding Whisper Maillet's research on US 93 deer-vehicle collisions and crossings and the WTI – WCS partnership to support her as a Native American graduate student pursuing her advanced degree.

Summary

Bear study has completed field studies and is now in analysis and write-up. Road-kill data collection, tracking bed data collection protocols are all in place as are databases and quality assurance/quality control systems. All protocols are being documented in the Field Methods Handbook. Field Methods Handbook and Measures of Effectiveness report are 90% and 75% drafted, respectively. Considerable effort focused on hiring a field technician and preparing the track beds for data collection. Tracking beds are being monitored twice weekly and characteristics of sites where deer-road interaction events occur are being collected as well.